



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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Embargo until: Tuesday, October 14, 2003 – 9:30 a.m. [ 11 a.m. for Woonsocket announcement]

### **Cumberland, Woonsocket Teachers Receive \$25,000 Milken Awards**

An 8<sup>th</sup>-grade mathematics and science teacher at the Cumberland Middle School and a construction and building-technology teacher at the Woonsocket Career and Technical Center have each received \$25,000 National Educator Awards from the Milken Family Foundation.

Mary Ann Guerin and Charles R. Myers Jr. were each presented with the awards today (October 14<sup>th</sup>) in surprise ceremonies at their schools.

Mary Ann Guerin, of Cumberland, has been teaching at the Cumberland Middle School since 1993, and since 1995 she has worked on projects in conjunction with the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

“She encourages her students to think, not just to come up with the right answers,” said Peter McWalters, the R.I. Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, in presenting the award to her. “She makes her students feel smart and capable, and she motivates them to go beyond expectations.”

She has initiated several innovative projects, such as a challenge in which her students see who can build a boat to hold the most pennies. Her students also designed a dinosaur out of potato chips.

Charles Myers, of Coventry, has been teaching in the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center since 1996. His program equips students with the skills and experience to enter the building and construction trades.

Before he began teaching, he had worked for a decade in the construction industry, and he holds state certification in construction and carpentry.

Each year one of his classes builds a house that is sold to a first-time home-buyer in the community; profits are turned back to the district to support the school and for college scholarships.

“His students demonstrate learning with community service,” Commissioner McWalters said. “Mr. Myers is an example of why we need to recruit teachers from business and industry and bring their expertise into the classroom.”

The Milken Family Foundation’s National Educator Awards were established in 1987, and they have been granted in Rhode Island since 1990. There have been 59 recipients in the state.